

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation  
Water Resources Division  
Water Rights Bureau

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**  
**For Routine Actions with Limited Environmental Impact**

Note: Instructions to DNRC staff for preparing this EA can be found at:  
[http://www.dnrc.state.mt.us/eis\\_ea.html](http://www.dnrc.state.mt.us/eis_ea.html)

**Part I. Proposed Action Description**

1. *Applicant/Contact name and address:* Valley Garden Golf Village Homeowners Association, PO Box 1315, Ennis, Mt. 59729
2. *Type of action:* Application To Change A Water Right # 30019240-41F
3. *Water source name:* Groundwater wells
4. *Location affected by project:* E2 Sec 32 T5S R1W, Madison County
5. *Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits:*  
The applicant proposes to drill three additional wells to supply the Valley Garden Golf Village. The permitted flow rate of 160 GPM, and permitted volume of 165 acre-feet will not be exceeded. Two wells will be located in the SESENE Sec 32 T5S R1W, and one will be in the NENESE Sec 32 T5S R1W Madison County. The DNRC shall Authorize a Change if the applicant proves that the criteria in MCA # 85-2-402 are met.
6. *Agencies consulted during preparation of the Environmental Assessment:*  
(include agencies with overlapping jurisdiction) Montana State Historical Preservation Office, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Montana Natural Heritage Program, Madison County Planning Office, Montana department of Environmental Quality,

**Part II. Environmental Review**

**1. Environmental Impact Checklist:**

**PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

**WATER QUANTITY, QUALITY AND DISTRIBUTION**

**Water quantity** - Assess whether the source of supply is identified as a chronically or periodically dewatered stream by DFWP. Assess whether the proposed use will worsen the already dewatered condition.

*Determination:* The source of water is groundwater which is not listed as chronically or periodically dewatered by the DFWP.

**Water quality** - *Assess whether the stream is listed as water quality impaired or threatened by DEQ, and whether the proposed project will affect water quality.*

*Determination:* This groundwater source is not listed on the DEQ, 303(d) list.

**Groundwater** - *Assess if the proposed project impacts ground water quality or supply. If this is a groundwater appropriation, assess if it could impact adjacent surface water flows.*

*Determination:* This change application is not requesting any additional water. The groundwater supply should not be impacted.

**DIVERSION WORKS** - *Assess whether the means of diversion, construction and operation of the appropriation works of the proposed project will impact any of the following: channel impacts, flow modifications, barriers, riparian areas, dams, well construction.*

*Determination:* Drilling three additional wells will have no channel impacts, or impacts on riparian areas or barriers.

#### **UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES**

**Endangered and threatened species** - *Assess whether the proposed project will impact any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants or aquatic species or any "species of special concern," or create a barrier to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife. For groundwater, assess whether the proposed project, including impacts on adjacent surface flows, would impact any threatened or endangered species or "species of special concern."*

*Determination:* The Montana Natural Heritage Program was contacted. A sensitive species of plant, the Spiny Skeletonweed may occur within the project site. It was last observed in 1900.

**Wetlands** - *Consult and assess whether the apparent wetland is a functional wetland (according to COE definitions), and whether the wetland resource would be impacted.*

*Determination:* There are no wetlands at the locations of these wells.

**Ponds** - *For ponds, consult and assess whether existing wildlife, waterfowl, or fisheries resources would be impacted.*

*Determination:* This project does not involve a pond.

**GEOLOGY/SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE** - *Assess whether there will be degradation of soil quality, alteration of soil stability, or moisture content. Assess whether the soils are heavy in salts that could cause saline seep.*

*Determination:* Drillings these wells will not degrade soil quality, alter soil stability, or moisture content. There is no saline seep near the proposed well locations.

**VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY/NOXIOUS WEEDS** - *Assess impacts to existing vegetative cover. Assess whether the proposed project would result in the establishment or spread of noxious weeds.*

*Determination:* Existing vegetative cover will be altered when the wells are drilled and the pipeline is installed. Noxious weeds may spread if the disturbed area is not replanted.

**AIR QUALITY** - *Assess whether there will be a deterioration of air quality or adverse effects on vegetation due to increased air pollutants.*

*Determination:* There will be no significant impact on air quality.

**HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES** - *Assess whether there will be degradation of unique archeological or historical sites in the vicinity of the proposed project.*

*Determination:* The State Historic Preservation Office was contacted. No previously recorded sites were located within the designated search locales. They recommend that a cultural inventory be conducted in order to determine whether or not sites exist and if they will be impacted.

**DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AND ENERGY** - *Assess any other impacts on environmental resources of land, water and energy not already addressed.*

*Determination:* No additional impacts on other environmental resources were identified.

<b>HUMAN ENVIRONMENT</b>
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**LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS** - *Assess whether the proposed project is inconsistent with any locally adopted environmental plans and goals.*

*Determination:* The Madison County Planning Office has approved this subdivision.

**ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES** - *Assess whether the proposed project will impact access to or the quality of recreational and wilderness activities.*

*Determination:* This project is located on private land, with no access to recreational or wilderness activities. No impact is expected.

**HUMAN HEALTH** - *Assess whether the proposed project impacts on human health.*

*Determination:* There should not be any impact on human health.

**PRIVATE PROPERTY** - *Assess whether there are any government regulatory impacts on private property rights.*

Yes \_\_\_ No X \_\_\_ *If yes, analyze any alternatives considered that could reduce, minimize, or eliminate the regulation of private property rights.*

*Determination:* No impacts predicted.

**OTHER HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES** - *For routine actions of limited environmental impact, the following may be addressed in a checklist fashion.*

*Impacts on:*

- (a) Cultural uniqueness and diversity? No significant impact
- (b) Local and state tax base and tax revenues? No significant impact
- (c) Existing land uses? No significant impact
- (d) Quantity and distribution of employment? No significant impact
- (e) Distribution and density of population and housing? No significant impact
- (f) Demands for government services? No significant impact
- (g) Industrial and commercial activity? No significant impact
- (h) Utilities? No significant impact
- (i) Transportation ? No significant impact
- (j) Saf ety? No significant impact
- (k) Other appropriate social and economic circumstances? No significant impact

**2. *Secondary and cumulative impacts on the physical environment and human population:***

Secondary Impacts No secondary impacts have been identified

Cumulative Impacts No cumulative impacts have been identified

**3. *Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures:*** None planned at this time.

**4. *Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative, if an alternative is reasonably available and prudent to consider:*** Water shortages have occurred using the existing system. Using the current system they could meter water and increase rates to discourage use, and save water.

***PART III. Conclusion***

**1. *Preferred Alternative*** They would prefer to add three new wells to the system, and use their full permitted flow rate & volume.

2 **Comments and Responses** No comments have been received.

3. **Finding:**

Yes\_\_\_ No **X** Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required?

*If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action:* Significant impacts have not been identified. An EIS is not required for this action.

*Name of person(s) responsible for preparation of EA:*

*Name:* Jan R Mack

*Title:* Water Resource Specialist

*Date:* April 20, 2006